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THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2015

Bicycles finding homes

Aubrey Foley is ready to hand over the reins of his beloved bike repair and donation initiative
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Heart to Home

Seniors in Port Colborne receive
hundreds of free frozen meals
and menu options
Page 3

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UPFRONT

■ **DONATION:** Port High students to take over program started by local retiree



Staff and students from Port Colborne High School loaded 46 bikes to be donated to people in Cuba into a truck Tuesday in Port Colborne.

Bicycles find a home in Blue Bears' den

MARYANNE FIRTH
Postmedia Network

Many hands make light work.

It's a theory Aubrey Foley is ready to put to the test.

The Port Colborne retiree, well known in the community for repairing bicycles to give to less-fortunate families both locally and abroad, is ready to hand over the reins of his beloved initiative. But not to just anyone.

Foley has decided to leave the project in the capable hands — many hands — of local Blue Bears.

Beginning in September, Port Colborne High School students will be the ones making repairs to the donated

bikes, which will then be shipped to adults and children in Cuba or given to families in need within the lake-side city.

"Doing what I'm doing alone, I have limited capacity," said Foley, who spends most days fixing up bikes in his home workshop.

In hopes of seeing more bikes reach those who need them, Foley, a former Blue Bear himself, approached Port High about getting involved with the project.

Principal Ann Kennerly "jumped in immediately," he said, and talks began of how to include the initiative in the curriculum.

The high school has a good relationship with the commu-

nity and proper onsite shop courses to handle the logistics of the project, Foley, 70, said. "They have the ability and the background to make it happen."

He plans to help co-ordinate the project, dubbed Bears4Bikes, and will be sitting down with school staff over the next few weeks to hammer out details and create a guideline for its operation.

Foley is hopeful Port High's efforts will motivate other schools across Ontario and beyond to do the same, ensuring used bikes once destined for landfills are instead made accessible to all who need them.

Students recently got a



PHOTOS BY MARYANNE FIRTH/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Staff and students from Port Colborne High School loaded 46 bikes — set to be donated to people in Cuba — into a truck on June 16 in Port Colborne.

sneak peek of what they'll be up to in the fall, helping to load 46 bikes that were set to be transported to Cuba.

"Staff and students are very supportive and excited about this," Kennerly said of the project, for which the school is already housing 63 bikes.

"They'll clean them up and make sure they're working properly," transportation teacher Mike Ferrelli said.

"It's a learning experience," he said, adding students will not only develop their mechanical skills, but also learn about giving to those who are less fortunate.

"It's about teamwork and giving back to the community both locally and globally," Kennerly said, adding the school will also need support from the community for the initiative to be a continued

success.

"We want to bear from people who want to contribute, whether with expertise, storage, bike donations or parts."

Bicycle donations will still be accepted at Foley's home, 255 Knoll St., as well as at the Elgin St. school.

maryanne.firth@summedia.ca
Twitter: @mfirth19bue

LOCAL NEWS

■ **SENIORS:** Heart to Home Meals Niagara gives away frozen meals to seniors in Port Colborne

Giving back to Port Colborne seniors

FRANKI IKEMAN
Postmedia Network

Seniors in Port Colborne received some free meals last Wednesday, thanks to Heart to Home Meals Niagara, who gave out hundreds of frozen meals and menus at the Friends over 55 Recreation Centre on Fielden Ave. in Port Colborne.

The family-run franchise said they wanted to say thank-you to the community which has been so supportive of their business in their first year, and to celebrate seniors' month by giving something back.

"I think we're very happy with the results," said Marianne Cheetham of the Niagara franchise. "I'm pleased to be able to do something for the community."

Approximately 50 seniors, a few regular customers and

a few who haven't used the service before, showed up to hear about the program and to get their hands on a sample meal or two, dessert and soup.

"I think we're very happy with the results," said Cheetham.

Jack O'Neill, president of Friends over 55, said the event was great for the seniors in the community.

"I think giving back to the seniors is the nicest thing anybody can do," said O'Neill.

He said that he tried one of the soups and that it was "out of this world" and that with his up-coming knee surgery, he would definitely be ordering some meals to help him and his wife relieve some pressure.

He would highly recommend it to any senior — or

anybody else for that matter — O'Neill said.

"This way they have a choice and I think it will go over well with them," he said.

When asked if she thought the event would bring in more business, Cheetham responded, "It will but that wasn't the main objective. It was to give back to the community because they've been supportive of our business."

Heart to Home Meals offers hundreds of frozen meals catering to several different dietary needs including vegetarian, diabetic, gluten-free and lactose-free.

There is no delivery charge and no minimum order.

For more information, visit www.hearttohome meals.ca.

franki.ikeman@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @FrankiIkeman



PHOTOS BY FRANKI IKEMAN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Heart to Home Meals Niagara gave away hundreds of frozen meals to celebrate Seniors' Month at the Friends over 55 Recreation Centre on June 17 in Port Colborne.



Katherine Hoeller, middle, from Heart to Home Meals Niagara gave away hundreds of frozen meals to celebrate Seniors' Month at the Friends over 55 Recreation Centre on June 17 in Port Colborne.



I'VE BEEN THINKING

A father or a dad?

PASTOR GARY TOMUCK

Wainfleet Congregational Christian Church

There was once a boy, now a man who tried everything to receive his father's approval.

Cadging for him as a young child, he shouted, "Nice shot, Dad!" before he even knew where the ball landed. Sometimes, it would be in the rough, the pond or the sand trap. He wasn't being sarcastic, he was young and foolish, proud of his father and hungry for his love and approval.

As he got older he broke records at his family business lifting solid hardwood lumber and even physically hurting himself longing for that all important acceptance and approval though it never really came or maybe it did partially.

I'm sure by now you have already figured out that the person in the above paragraph was me and that father was my own.

As a father, he worked very hard going from door to door asking people if they needed anything repaired or made new as in fixing screens, making doors and windows etc. Day and night seven days a week in all kinds of weather. Gradually saving enough money with much monetary and support from my mother, they worked to found and pioneer

our family business Welland Lumber and Builders Supplies Ltd., which continued from 1945 to 2010.

As a father he was a great provider, but as a dad I never knew him very well.

As he grew older, as we all do, it was very painful to watch this once very powerful young man deteriorate so quickly. Placed in a retirement home as his needs could not be met by family anymore, he had a very, very difficult time adjusting from a large house on the lake with a beautiful view of the lake to a one-room dwelling.

He became closed and even indifferent towards the things of God. After he fell in the retirement home and was taken to hospital that was truly the beginning of the end. We did not know that his bodily functions would shut down so quickly. We did not know he would suffer so greatly and linger on for so long. We surely did not know that he would never speak a word again.

I tried to witness to him, praying for him in his dying hours that he might still be able to hear and understand and hoping against hope that he would receive Christ before it was too late. I sometimes beat myself up thinking "what if I had tried a little harder," more persistent in prayer, in my speech, in my actions.

But then only God knows my heart, my fathers heart and the hearts of everyone. Only

He can and must draw a sinner to himself or salvation is not possible.

I encourage anyone reading this article to redeem the time as none of us are guaranteed that we will see tomorrow.

Avoid a life time of regrets my making your peace with them before it is too late. If at all possible. They have made many sacrifices for you, love them, forgive them, honour them and their memories if they have passed on.

This is my first Father's Day tribute as I have done five for my mother previously. To understand true fatherhood we have to look at Jesus and His relationship to God, His own Father. He perfectly honoured His heavenly Father in every way and at all times.

For the perfect demonstration of fatherhood and the relationships with in it we must also look at the Trinity. The Father's glory is Christ who glorified His Father and Jesus anointed by the Spirit beyond measure also has the Holy Spirit who's main function is to bring supreme glory to the Son.

What is God the Father like? He is like Jesus who said, "If you have seen me you have seen the Father." Jesus is the exact representation of God who Images Him and as His followers then and now we are also called to image Him to the world.

You cannot be a Christian unless you are a disciple of Christ. You cannot have the Son

without the Father. You can have a House but not a Home. You can have a biological father but not a dad. Jesus called God his Father 'Abba', which means daddy. That term denotes a very close and intimate relationship to another person.

I have two examples in my own life that relate to our salvation and focus on fatherhood.

I was trapped with my leg brace at a young age having got it caught in the railway tracks behind our house in Welland as a train was rapidly approaching. My friend ran home and called my father who released my brace and set me free. In the ultimate sense the train of judgment is coming the horn is blowing and only by coming to Christ will we be set free.

A second example as I tried to walk wearing my leg brace I fell down many times but my mother and father encouraged me to walk across the room shouting as I tried, "Come on, son, you can do it!" I kept trying until one day I fell into the open arms of my parents.

The parallel here is that only believers who persevere with God's enabling grace will one day cross that finishing line with others cheering them on as they will collapse into the open arms of Christ and have the Lord say to them, "My good and faithful servant, you have made it home, the race is over."

Are you a father or are you a dad?



SUPPLIED PHOTO

This Harry Stott photo shows Yvonne at Montreal in May 1967.

Former Yvonne wrecked off India with large spill

SKIP GILLHAM
 For Postmedia Network

The Greek tanker Yvonne came through the St. Lawrence Seaway during Canada's centennial year. It was inbound for Evergo Shipping Co. Inc. in 1967 but it was not a frequent caller to our shores.

This was originally the Norwegian vessel Holmgår. The 154.2-metre-long liquid cargo carrier was built at Port Glasgow, Scotland, in 1961 and became Yvonne in 1965. It moved to Somali Republic interests as Roula E.K. in 1969, became Yvonne again, under the Panama flag, in 1970 before acquiring a final name of Cosmos Pioneer late that year for service under the flag of

India.

Cosmos Pioneer ran aground and was wrecked in heavy weather on June 17, 1973. The ship was about seven kilometres off the Port Blair Light and was carrying an estimated 13,000 tonnes of fuel and diesel oil in its 20 cargo tanks. Cosmos Pioneer was on a voyage between the Indian ports of Bombay and Kandla when it was lost off the northeast coast.

Four members of the crew perished in the tragedy and another 49 were injured as the ship was abandoned. The hull ultimately broke up, releasing the cargo into the sea. The spill impacted local shrimp and lobster beds but much of the oil was dispersed avoiding an even worse catastrophe.

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■ **HEALTH:** Port Colborne doctor receives teaching award from McMaster Medical

Port MD earns education honour

FRANKI IKEMAN
Postmedia Network

A Port Colborne family doctor and assistant clinical professor at the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine's Niagara Regional Campus has been awarded the 2015 John C. Sibley Award for excellence in education by part-time faculty.

Amanda Bell graduated from McMaster's medical school in 1998 and moved to Port Colborne after completing her residency in Ottawa. Bell juggles many different hats, as she says, which keep her quite busy, as well as her two children. She runs her family practice in Port Colborne part-time, is the clinical consultant for the sexual health division of the region of Niagara — working at various sexual health clinics

around the region and has teaching and administrative roles at the university's satellite campus located at Brock.

Bell said she loves what she does and she tries to show her students that, in the hopes that they might also choose to settle in Niagara.

"I think that we have the best combination in Niagara of high quality, intelligent, leading-edge trained physicians with a community feel," said Bell. "We're connected to the people, it matters that we're here, we're not just anonymous faces."

Joanne Ferracoli, health services manager with the City of Port Colborne has worked with Bell on several different projects on physician recruitment and medical education, and has known her



Dr. Amanda Bell at Niagara Health System on June 17 in St. Catharines.

for many years.

Ferracoli said Bell is the picture of a role-model mom who can do it all.

"She's just such a treat. She's probably the best role model that anyone could have," she said.

She added that Port Colborne is a city that appreciates and puts health-care front and centre, making it a good

one for anyone in the health-care profession to work and live in.

Ferracoli said that Bell's care for her patients is what makes her so well-liked within the community.

"Her level of care for her patients is number one all the time — she's an excellent family physician," she said.

And it's not hard for her to do. Bell said, adding that the close-knit community contributes to loving her work.

"My patients are the same people who are the parents at my kid's basketball game," Bell said. "I think that connection is important."

"It's really the network of people that I get to work with that makes it easy to enjoy what I do and to be recognized for doing that is just kind of icing on the cake."

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FATALITY

Man killed in Port Colborne ATV crash

Postmedia Network

Police are continuing to investigate a Sunday ATV crash that left a 20-year-old man dead.

At about 11:40 p.m., Niagara Regional Police, Port Colborne Fire and Emergency Services and Niagara EMS responded to a collision report on Berkley Ave. in Port Colborne.

Initial investigation revealed a 20-year-old male was driving an ATV westbound on Berkley when he left the roadway and struck a hydro pole on the road's north side.

The driver was taken by ambu-

lance to Welland hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries.

Early Monday morning, the NRP issued a media release stating the man's name would not be released at that time out of consideration for the family.

As of press time, no further details had been released.

The incident remains under investigation by the NRP's collision reconstruction unit.

Police are asking witnesses to call 905-735-7811 ext. 5500.

[illegible]

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■ HOME SALES

From Toronto, with money

DON FRASER

Postmedia Network

It's a mass-migration known throughout the real estate world.

June 30 is the biggest, craziest closing day of the year. Families with school-aged kids often find it most convenient to move that day, with the Canada Day long weekend giving people an extra day to unpack.

"Oh man, it goes totally nuts," Cotie Drinkwater, Niagara franchisee owner of Two Men and a Truck movers, said with a laugh. "And we're totally booked — we can't handle anything more at the end of this month."

*The summer stays pretty busy for us, but that weekend

is just unbelievable. All of our movers will be out.

"We do our best to make sure everything is scheduled so there are no issues,"

Meanwhile, local housing affordability — and especially GTA commuters and buyers — are becoming big factors in driving real estate deals throughout Niagara.

Compared to swelling real estate prices in Toronto and Vancouver, this region remains friendly for cost-conscious home buyers.

According to a December Overview produced by the Niagara Association of Realtors, the average resale home price in Niagara for 2014 was \$251,531. That compares to \$238,742 in 2013.

It's a different story in Toronto, where the average price of a detached home recently topped \$1 million, according to the city's real estate board.

"Affordability in Niagara is still intact," said Patrick Burke, a sales representative with Sally McGarr Realty Corp., based in St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"People getting into the market here are not getting priced out of it."

While house hunters must still diligently ferret out good deals, "people don't have to get financially stretched to get into the market here ... and mortgage interest rates are still very good," Burke said.

For those homebuyers with one foot in the GTA, housing purchase choices are steadily moving east, observes Stephen Oliver, president of the Niagara Association of Realtors.

"We're seeing a push from the GTA out, now," said Oliver, who is also a sales rep with Coldwell Banker Momentum in Fort Erie.

"It used to be Grimsby, then west St. Catharines (real estate) was the cutoff for GTA commuters. Now, it seems it's even gone to Niagara Falls, where they may be commuting to Oakville and Burlington."

Retirees from outside Niagara have joined the home-buying tide here, he adds.

Burke is feeling the GTA push as well.

"I think if you polled the top 30 agents in St. Catharines, they'd say there's a significant trend coming from that crowd," he said.

"They're not buying one particular style," Burke adds, noting choices include detached homes, new construction and townhomes.

"It's the old cliché — they're selling for \$700,000 to \$1.2 million there and buying here for \$300,000 to 400,000."

Concerns about rock-low mortgage rates spiking up — a preoccupation in recent years — has also eased considerably, Burke said.

"The market itself is in a comfortable position, where

these rates are (felt to be) the new norm," he said.

"How will the market change if rates start to creep up? We'll see."

For new home sales, it's fast becoming GTA all the way, agrees Niagara Home Builders' Association president Ed Lucchetta.

"In general, at least 50% of the new homes that are being sold in Niagara are being sold to people outside of Niagara," he said. "They're coming from Burlington and the GTA, basically. They're selling their homes, coming here and buying a better product at a more affordable price."

Continued on Page 9

PATRICK'S POSTS

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■ HOME SALES

From Toronto, with money

From Page 8

Niagara's ideal location, amenities, calmer traffic and decent climate are other factors prompting this trend, he said.

"Everybody seems to be extremely busy, and there's a shortage of good, quality tradespeople that all homebuilders are struggling with today."

Lucchetta said bungalow purchases are also trending higher in the area.

"People are moving to Niagara for bungalow-type living," said the owner of Welland-based Lucchetta Homes.

"You're not stuck with the GTA mentality, where (they) basically build two-storey homes or townhouses ... here, half of the product built is bungalows, and it's hard to find that, out of this area."

Many are people relocating with home offices and who are working out of their new homes in the region.

HIGHER END PROPERTIES

In Toronto, homes topping \$1 million in value are routine but in Niagara, they're part of an elite market.

Patrick Burke of Sally McGarr Realty Corp. said last year, there were at least 21 of those properties sold in Niagara.

Niagara-on-the-Lake topped the list at 11, six were sold in Niagara Falls, two in Fonthill and two in St. Catharines.

Buyers cross the gamut from local professionals and businesspeople to wealthier retirees and the Asian market.

Some have it as a second

Niagara Region has also taken notice of the healthy housing market.

Mary Lou Tanner, the Region's chief planner, said 1,300 residential building permits were issued in 2012.

property.

"It's a real range of buyers," he said. As for Toronto buyers, "they'll still look at pricing and historical data, as any buyer should."

"They're not coming from Mississauga with their Mississauga-values (perceptions) while looking down here," he said, adding that means local high-value properties must be priced accordingly.

"We get that from some sellers — 'How do you reach the Toronto people?' In fact, the Toronto people are coming here (and looking at these properties) every day."

That jumped to 1,822 the next year and more than 2,000 in 2014. Tanner calls it a "significant trend upwards."

"We are seeing GTA and Hamilton-area driven growth," she said, pointing



FOR TYMCZYSZYŃ / EDISTMEDIA.NETWORK

Home at 10 Shore Blvd. in St. Catharines that is listed at \$1.495-million. The high-end luxury home is one of several properties in Niagara available for more than \$1 million.

especially to west Niagara.

To that end, there's a desire to balance the pluses of living in the region, with job locations further west of the Region.

Tanner said smaller household sizes are another general pattern regionally, especially in St. Catharines, central and southern areas of Niagara.

"It means there's more housing units needed, because there are fewer people in the houses," she said.

Tanner said the changing demographics are also influ-

HIGH SELLERS

What are some of the prices and locations of currently listed high-end properties?

The Sally McGarr website offers a few examples, as of Wednesday:
Lincoln: 2499 North Service Rd, \$1.8 million.
St. Catharines: 1244

Lakeshore Rd., \$1.5 million.

St. Catharines: 10 Shore

Blvd., \$1.495 million.

St. Catharines; 45 Forest

Hill Rd., \$1.3 million.

St. Catharines: 25 Graham

Ave., \$1.194 million.

NOTL: 43 Elizabeth St.,
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encing the choice in residences.

"And of course, we are see-

ing that migration from the GTA as well, which is also driving that demand."



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LOCAL NEWS

■ 22ND ANNUAL FEAST

Kim Mitchell to headline Niagara Food Festival

ALLAN BENNER
Postmedia Network

Kim Mitchell will be the main musical course, served with a heaping side dish of Niagara's own talent, when Niagara Food Festival returns to downtown Welland Sept. 11 to 13.

The Canadian rock icon will headline the festival's Saturday night concert lineup that also features Niagara-based rock bands The Mandevilles and Street Pharmacy opening.

The Peninsula's Tastiest Party will live up to its name by featuring a growing list of food vendors for the 22nd annual festival, said Niagara Food Festival chair Erica Walters during a media launch at Welland Civic Square.

"Most importantly about the food festival is we have 35 vendors who will be putting the food back into the Niagara Food Festival, including a handful of new

vendors and traditional favourites," Walters said.

Additional vendors are still being added to the lineup.

The entertainment begins Friday evening "with a definite local flair" featuring Redline, Wednesday's Engine and Orangetan – Niagara-based rock bands that have each "gathered a huge local following."

Sunday, the festival teams up with Niagara country music station Country 89, bringing the River Junction Band, and Brad Battle to the stage.

A new attraction was added to this year's festival – a ticketed event called the Patio Lantern Party, giving people "up-close stage access, a semi-private bar and a chance to win four back-stage passes to meet Kim Mitchell," Walters said.

"Don't worry, if you happen to miss out on the limited number of tickets for sale, we'll be giving our

guests a chance to win tickets and special VIP packages, and other prizes through social media contests on our Facebook and Twitter pages," she added.

Since its inception, Walters said, the festival has grown into one of Niagara's premier events.

"We have created a great Niagara tradition that brings thousands of hungry Niagara visitors to downtown Welland each year with fantastic local and national entertainment and community centred events," she said.

"This year we plan to return back to our roots and celebrate the many things the Niagara region is famous for, from local artisans and farmers to chefs."

In addition to the food and music, local chefs will have a chance to showcase their talents in a series of Black Box Challenges on the festival's Mobile Culinary Theatre. Canadian barbecue chef Ted Reader will be the



ALLAN BENNER/POSTMEDIA NETWORK
Board members Diane Chivers, left, and Erica Walters will be putting the food back into the Niagara Food Festival, Sept. 11 to 13 in downtown Welland.

guest emcee during the final hour of the competition, as top local chefs vie for a chance to compete at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto.

The stage will also feature local chefs who have demonstrated their skill on Food Network Canada television programs, such as Erin Smith, a Port Colborne chef who was the top competitor on a recent episode of *Chopped Canada*.

The festival's craft and artisan market is also being expanded "with a renewed focus on balanced healthy living in

2015."

While the event is sponsored by Niagara College, the City of Welland and Molson Coors Canada, the festival board's secretary treasurer Diane Chivers said there are still opportunities for additional sponsorships.

Walters urged people to visit www.niagarafestival.com, and the festival's Facebook page for up to date information.

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SCIENCE

Methane offers chance of life on Mars

ROB HOULE
Postmedia Network

The planet Mars has gas. That recent discovery by a team of scientists, including Brock University assistant professor Nigel Blamey, suggests the Red Planet could sustain life, although not the bimedial kind.

"When we're looking for life on Mars, it's not what we perhaps as humans expect — something walking across the surface. It's most likely going to be in the form of bacteria, micro-organisms," Blamey says in an audio clip released by Brock.

Blamey is currently conducting research in New Mexico and could not be reached for a telephone interview.

Aside from Blamey, the project included researchers from Western Uni-

versity, the University of Glasgow in Scotland and was led by professor John Parnell at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland.

The project saw scientists crush samples of six meteorites found on Earth that originated from Mars. Those crushed samples yielded methane gas which, as it does on this planet, could provide food for micro-organisms.

The finding "provides a strong indication that rocks on Mars contain a large reservoir of methane," Parnell says in a news release from Brock University.

"So while we cannot say that this discovery is proof of the existence of life on Mars, it gives strong encouragement to continue looking for methane sources that could support life."

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POLITICS



GREG FURBERGER/POSTMEDIA NETWORK FILE PHOTO

Port Colborne celebrates the August civic holiday with their Canal Days festival. Niagara Falls resident Clarke Bitter would like to see the holiday in the region renamed Niagara Day to celebrate such attractions across the peninsula.

Falls man wants August civic holiday renamed Niagara Day

RAY SPITERI
Postmedia Network

It's Simcoe Day in Toronto and Benjamin Vaughan Day in Vaughan.

Clarke Bitter thinks it's time politicians in this region name the August civic holiday Niagara Day to "celebrate everything Niagara."

"Until your civic government

names it something, it's simply the civic holiday and that's the most boring name for a holiday in the world," the Niagara Falls resident said.

The civic holiday, which is celebrated on the first Monday of August, is known by many names in different provinces and municipalities.

He said he hopes Niagara

Region will proclaim the holiday Niagara Day in time for 2016, with volunteer committees set up at the region and in all 12 Niagara municipalities to help guide civic celebrations.

He said while communities have special events planned for that long weekend, such as Port Colborne with Canal Days, Bitter believes more can be done to promote civic pride across the peninsula.

"I'm sick and tired of hearing

negatives about Niagara. Let's talk about what's good here," he said.

For example, Bitter said Niagara Falls has the falls as well as a history of power generation. Niagara-on-the-Lake is wine country with a lot of history. Port Erie has one of the oldest horse race tracks in North America, while Welland's Merritt Park amphitheatre stage and canal could play a major role in Niagara Day celebrations.

"It would be a good way to get people from nearby states and Ontario to come to Niagara and not just Niagara Falls," he said.

"Maybe we could find a way to sponsor a Niagara Day stakes race in Port Erie, or find a way to hold a New Year's Eve-style concert in Queen Victoria Park in the summer. There's different ways to celebrate."

Niagara Region deputy clerk Natasha Deves said the region has reached out to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for guidance in this process, but as of Tuesday afternoon, had not yet received a response.

"At this time, staff has only been able to find examples of single and lower-tier municipalities changing the name of the August holiday," she said.

"It is possible that an action such as this by Niagara Region, an upper-tier municipality, may require a triple majority support. Staff will continue to investigate."

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POLICE

Scammers targeting student job seekers, police warn

ROB HOULE
Postmedia Network

Students looking to make money this summer beware, scammers are banking on you being willing to pay to work.

Niagara Regional Police Det. Klara Dowd said last Thursday the NRP had received approximately 14 complaints since January, mostly from students who have been ripped off after posting online they are looking for work.

The scam works like this: Someone posts an ad on Kijiji that says they are looking for work. They are then contacted by someone purporting to be an employer and a meeting is arranged for

an interview at a coffee shop or other public location.

"During the meeting, he advises them that, 'Yes, you know what? You'll work out great. But prior to you starting your job, we need to get you some training,'" Dowd said, adding the job seeker can also be told they require certain work clothing, such as steel-toed boots.

"He says, 'For this, I require payment up front, and I will register you for the courses and I will get you safety equipment.' So up front, he is asking for cash," Dowd said.

If the job seeker doesn't have the money on them, the scammer provides

an advance cheque and asks him/her to cash it, and then remit the fee. The worthless cheque is cashed, the scammer makes off with the money and the job seeker never hears from him again.

On average, Dowd said, job seekers are relieved of \$250.

She said the scam has been played out across the region.

Those who wish to leave an anonymous tip related to the scam can contact Crime Stop-

pers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS), go online at www.niagaratips.com or text 274637 (CRIMES), keyword Niagara, then your tip.

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■ SHIPPING

Sendzik wants one law governing ballast water

ROB HOWLE
Putmedia Network

The mayor of St. Catharines hopes his motion on ship ballast water rides a wave of support to a level playing field.

A resolution presented by Walter Sendzik at the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative conference last week in Sarnia that called on the United States

and Canadian governments to harmonize ballast water regulations received unanimous support.

Ships take on and discharge ballast water to increase stability and manoeuvrability.

Sendzik's engagement with the ballast water issue dates back about two years, when he was still head of Greater Niagara

Chamber of Commerce.

He said back then the New York state government implemented a plan to treat ballast water. Problem is, the technology to render the ballast water to the quality demanded by New York does not exist, Sendzik said.

He said the legislation, which was to come into effect this past January, would exempt U.S. ves-

sels from the new regulations for five years. He said that under pressure from chambers of commerce and the provincial and federal governments, that legislation has been pushed back to January 2017.

"The other ships would have to reach that threshold," Sendzik said, putting Canadian shipowners at a huge disadvantage since they would not be allowed to sail American waters.

Sendzik said his resolution — with the support of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative composed of the mayors of 144 U.S. and Canadian municipalities around the Great Lakes Basin — presents a unified front of stakeholders seeking harmonized rules related to Great Lakes shipping.

"It really does show binational strength... to really push for one level of ballast water regulation," Sendzik said.

"What we've seen previously is that New York state will do one, then Michigan state will do one, then Ohio will do one. And we're saying there needs to be one regulation that's agreed upon.... And it should be a federal-to-federal regulation on ballast water as it pertains to the Great Lakes."

Ballast water regulations came into play in the early 1990s to keep foreign invaders — fish and plants — from

entering the Great Lakes. At that time, ocean going vessels entering the Great Lakes were forbidden from discharging into the lakes ballast water taken near shore elsewhere.

With the passing of the harmonization resolution, Sendzik said it is now Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative policy that will be pushed at all levels of government on each side of the border.

One rule for everyone sits well with at least one Canadian shipping company.

"There's been an issue for a number of years where we've had differing regulations in the U.S. — between the two federal governments and the various states around the lakes," said Mira Hube, Algoma Central Corp's director of environment. "So harmonization of that would be very helpful."

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■ BEACH

No more day passes at Sherkston

ALLAN BENNER
Postmedia Network

If you're planning a day at Sherkston beach, you might want to spend the night, too.

As of this season, only overnight guests at Sherkston Shores Resort have access to its beach facilities.

The resort has closed the door on allowing day passes to use its beaches this year, said Cherlie Moskalyk, regional manager of the resort at 490 Empire Rd. in Port Colborne.

She said only resort homeowners, campers, rental tenants or their guests are permitted to use the beaches, as well as residents of surrounding neighbourhoods with a LOS-1R0 postal code.

Moskalyk said the private resort, owned and operated by Carefree RV Resorts, started the phasing in the changes during the past three

years by no longer advertising to promote day visits to the beach, and then increasing prices to dissuade day visitors.

"The majority of our park is owned by residents here at Sherkston, and they pay for that use" of the beaches, she said.

"There have been documents provided over the last couple of years that we would gradually get to the point that there would be none, and this is the year that there would be no day visitors."

As a result, Moskalyk said the number of day visitors at the beach has been decreasing annually.

"There's been a notable difference," she said.

Despite the new policy, Moskalyk said there have been no problems at the gates.

"Not at all," she said when

asked if resort staff had to deal with angry would-be beachgoers at the gate.

"If they've been coming over the past number of years, they would have gotten

the documentation" telling people about the coming changes, she added.

She said people who arrive wanting to spend the day at the resort are advised to

instead visit Nickel Beach of any of the other public access beaches.

But for people who want to visit Sherkston beach, "absolutely come and stay with us,"

Moskalyk said. "That's how you can use our beach and our amenities and things like that."

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MARYANNE EHRM / POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Grade 8 students Jordyn Minor and Makana Scott got a visit at McKay Public School Friday from Niagara Regional Police officers wishing to thank the teens for a recent \$500 donation to the Motorcycle Ride for Dad, an event that raises money for prostate cancer research. The pair, along with friends Sentzenina Defraites and Taylor Smith, sold chocolate moustaches at the Port Colborne school in November and December in order to raise funds for the charity.



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LOCAL NEWS

■ **LIQUOR:** Niagara part of craft beer boom

Craft beer booming at 'rapid pace'

RAY SPITERI
Postmedia Network

Call it the rise of the little guy. And everyone, even government, is taking notice.

The craft-beer industry employs more than 1,000 people in direct brewery jobs — almost double the number from 10 years ago.

In 2014-15, LCBO sales of Ontario craft beer grew to more than \$68 million, up almost 36% over the previous year.

The phenomenon has hit Niagara, with several local craft brewers opening up locations and a teaching brewery program being offered at Niagara College.

Niagara College brewmaster professor Jon Downing said since the program began in 2010, it has grown from one to four classes. Even that can't keep up with the

200 to 300 people who apply each year.

He said college statistics show 90% to 95% of graduates go on to future employment in the industry, but his numbers show "every single one of our graduates are employed, they all had jobs in breweries."

"The demand for students is there because the industry is growing at such a rapid pace," said Downing.

To celebrate the growth in the industry, Ontario recently concluded a 10-day, province-wide Craft Beer Week, which recognized the thriving, locally based craft-beer market and exposed consumers to the craft-beer experience.

Now in its sixth year, Ontario Craft Beer Week featured events at breweries, pubs, restaurants

and venues across the province, such as tastings events, brewery tours, food pairings and music nights.

The continued growth in the craft-beer industry is one reason the provincial government is modernizing Ontario's beer retailing and distribution system, including opening up ownership in the network of Beer Stores to all Ontario beer makers, creating a new craft category to profile craft beer in the Beer Store, and requiring the Beer Store to devote a minimum of 20% of available shelf space to small brewers.

Starting this December, beer sales will be available in some grocery stores, and will eventually be expanded to up to 450 grocery-store locations across the province, giving Ontarians more

convenience and choice. All new private retailers will be required to support the sale of small brewers' products.

According to the government, these measures represent the most significant changes to the province's alcohol retailing sector in nearly 90 years.

Downing estimates about 100 breweries have opened across Ontario during the last five years.

"There are 10 to 15 opening a year in the GTA alone," he said. "Five breweries in Hamilton opened the last year or so."

And it's not just the big cities, said Downing.

"If Ridgeway can support a brewery (Brimstone Brewing Company), I think any community in Ontario can."

He said craft beer is a true local industry. For example, Downing said local farmers in Niagara are growing hops for local brewers.

"It's local people supporting local people. There's a sense of community."

When Eric Martin opened Taps in Virgil in 2004, the brewery scene in Niagara and Ontario was not as crowded.

"At that time there were no other brewers in Niagara-on-the-Lake and probably 30 breweries in all of Ontario. There's

about 200 now. There seems to be one opening every week."

Now located on Queen St., in Niagara Falls, Taps has become a central figure in the downtown's ongoing revitalization efforts.

Martin, who is a co-owner of Taps, said he has noticed the public's taste for beer has changed over the years.

"People's tastes are more complex — they're always looking for more choices, varieties, flavours and that's a good thing."

Fergyle Duncan, a bar manager at Silversmith Brewing Company, said since opening in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2011, business has been booming.

He said the success has allowed Silversmith to distribute throughout local bars, events and restaurants across Ontario.

"We've hired several more people. It's been nothing but growing," said Duncan. "We're expecting our busiest summer ever. We're grateful for the support of locals. People have discovered they like good-tasting beer and they can get it close to home."

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RAY SPITERI/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Phil Everett, head brewer at Taps, makes sure all is good with a batch of craft beer being brewed at the Queen St. business in Niagara Falls.



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■ **POLICING:** Controversial police practice under scrutiny by province

New rules for street checks

RAY SPITERI
Postmedia Network

Niagara Regional Police Services Board chair Bob Gale says it's "wise" of the province to establish rules to ensure street checks are done without bias and in a way that promotes public confidence.

The Ontario government announced it's moving to standardize police street checks. During the summer, it will consult

with community organizations, policing partners, civil liberty groups and the public to develop a set of rules to govern the controversial practice.

The government said its approach will be based on respect for individual human and Charter rights, while recognizing the need for police to keep Ontario's communities safe.

"I'm happy the province is stepping in. This is an issue throughout North America," said

Gale.

Niagara Regional Police call the process street checks, while Toronto police call it carding, because of the contact cards used to collect personal information from people who aren't suspected of a crime.

The interaction starts when an officer approaches someone and strikes up a conversation. The officer asks for identification. The officer records the details electronically.

Critics have blasted the process for targeting black people and others from ethnic minorities.

"Public trust in police is essential for building even safer communities," said Yasir Naqvi, minister of community safety and correctional services.

"We recognize that some police street-check practices erode that trust. That is why we are moving forward on putting in place practices to sustain and bolster trust, while giving the police the tools they need to do their work. Every Ontarian must have the confidence that their interactions with police are governed by the principles of fairness, respect and dignity."

Cliff Priest, president of the Niagara Region Police Association, said he's not sure how Toronto police perform their checks, but that it has proved valuable to Niagara officers.

"We're not targeting people," he said, adding street checks have been part of modern policing for more than a century.

"It's an important part of our policing toolbox."

Gale said policing has changed from when he was officer for eight years. He left the industry in 1980.

"When I was a police officer, we asked questions, but it was not entered into a computer," he said.

"If you go to the scene of a break-in and if a person is right in front of it, you want to be able to ask questions. But if you're pulling people at random ... that doesn't sit well with me."

Priest said Niagara police "don't just willy-nilly stop people."

He also provided examples of where street checks assisted Niagara police in investigations, such as helping to narrow down suspects in the Paul Bernardo case and the solving of a homicide in London, Ont. That involved a suspect who had been in St. Catharines.

Niagara Regional Police Chief Jeff McGuire said he supports the province's desire to want to standardize police practices because there are "inconsistencies between police services on how things are handled."

He said the NRP, and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, which he becomes president of on Wednesday for a one-year period, looks forward to working with the government on creating standards.

THE DETAILS

As part of Ontario's plan to standardize police street checks, the province will seek input from partners on a number of topics, including:

- Circumstances when police may ask individual for information
- Rights of those being asked for their information
- How to enhance accountability mechanisms, training requirements
- Data collection, retention

day for a one-year period, looks forward to working with the government on creating standards.

"There is certainly a need to balance the rights of individuals with our mandate of maintaining public safety," said McGuire.

During a recent online Postmedia Network Chat with the Chief segment, McGuire said he defends street checks, as long as they aren't racially motivated.

He said while it's a "very delicate balance," there is "tremendous investigative value in some of the interactions."

McGuire, who spent 35 years in Toronto as a police officer and investigator before moving to Niagara, said an individual has the right to walk away without answering questions.

"If the officer believes you have been involved in something, he has to take the next step," he said.

"He has the authority of investigative detention. He can stop you and talk to you, but he has to be able to justify that. There has to be a reason."

Gale said he looks forward to McGuire's presentation to the police services board at its June 25 meeting. It's expected McGuire will talk about how Niagara police deal with street checks and will allow board members to ask questions.

"It's good to have this discussion. We, as a board, can make a policy, but we will want it to centre around the provincial guidelines."

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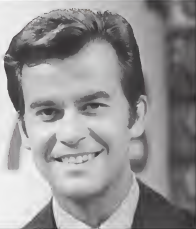
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"American Bandstand" Show Coming to Roselawn Theatre

American Bandstand Revisited stars 91.7 Giant FM DJ Jef Brown as Dick Clark (pictured)



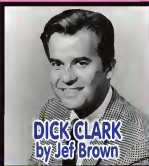
Calling all fans of 1950s Rock'n'Roll! Don't miss "American Bandstand Revisited" when it comes to the intimate Roselawn Theatre in Port Colborne for two fabulous shows on Saturday July 25 at 8pm and Sunday July 26 at 3pm. This fun-filled musical theatre presentation celebrates the long running TV program launched in 1956 with host Dick Clark. At the Roselawn show, the role of Dick Clark will be portrayed by Niagara's number one DJ, Jef Brown from 91.7 Giant-FM.

"American Bandstand Revisited" also includes outstanding live musical performances highlighted by tributes to Ricky Nelson, Del Shannon, Connie Francis, Dion, Paul Anka and Bobby Darin. Song highlights include "Hello

Mary Lou", "Runaway", "Lipstick on Your Collar", "Runaway", "Diana" and "Splish Splash" amongst many other crowd favourites. Of course, true to American Bandstand tradition, this audience-interactive show also features a "Rate the Record" segment to add to the fun!

Tickets to see "American Bandstand Revisited" at the Roselawn Theatre in Port Colborne on Saturday July 25 at 8:00pm and Sunday July 26 at 3pm are on sale now. Value-priced at only \$29 (all inclusive!), tickets are available by phone # 905-834-7572, or via pick-up at the theatre box office at 296 Fielden Avenue, Port Colborne. Don't miss this "Rockin' 1950s Dance Party" when it comes to Port Colborne!

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■ COMMUNITY: Celebration welcomes Pan Am symbol to the Rose City



MARYVANE FIRTH/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Betty Huard, Wayne Jaroslowski and Cheryl Stranges were excited to catch a glimpse of the Pan Am Games torch on Saturday in Welland.

Hundreds cheer on Games torch

MARYVANE FIRTH
Postmedia Network

Here to cheer!

The words were imprinted not only on the flags handed out to visitors to Welland market square Saturday, but also on the minds of those who lined the streets to welcome the 2015 Pan Am Games torch to the Rose City.

Festivities kicked off at market square, where hundreds gathered to watch the torch lit for the city's first torchbearer, former Olympic skier and Niagara Falls native Nancy Gee.

It was an event Cheryl Stranges wasn't about to miss.

The Welland resident was present when the Olympic torch came through her hometown in December 2009. She remembers the excitement of the day and the community and national pride.

It's an experience she wanted to relive Saturday at the market.

Being chosen to host Pan Am Games competitions gives Welland the opportunity to showcase what it has to offer, including its beautiful waterway, Stranges said.

Residents she added, should take pride in the fact the world will be watching the Rose City from July 11 to 14.

Pride could be seen in the red Canada T-shirts and supportive signs that lined the torch relay route, which went from market square, down King St. to Lincoln St., where an additional stop was made at the Welland Com-

munity Wellness Complex.

The cavalcade leading the way for the city's torchbearers then travelled down King St. to Ontario Rd., onto Prince Charles Dr. and onto Colborne St.

That's where Matthew Fraracci and family eagerly awaited the arrival of his aunt, Mariann Zorgel, who was also chosen for the honour.

"It makes me proud to be Canadian," Fraracci said, calling it "pretty cool" that his family was able to be a part of history.

"This is definitely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

After arriving at Colborne St., the torch switched hands a number of times as it moved along the canal side before entering the water with help from members of the South Niagara Canoe Club.

Carried by 15-year-old club member Lillian Clark, the torch circled the waterway in front of the Welland Pan Am Flat-water Centre before returning to shore and ending the city's portion of the relay.

"We couldn't have asked for a better day," said Welland Pan Am co-ordinator Cassandra Magazzeni, who was pleased with the sunny weather and large turnout.

"Thank you to all the residents and visitors for the support they showed today," she said. "We look forward to seeing everyone back here in a couple weeks."

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■ ECONOMY

South Niagara could end uppaying for two airports

KARENA WALTER
Postmedia Network

Niagara District Airport could bring millions of dollars in economic benefit to the area if Niagara Region takes it over.

The commission that currently operates the airport is advocating just such a plan — one that would leave south Niagara residents funding two airports.

Members from St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake — the municipalities that fund the north Niagara airport — will ask their councils to support transferring operations to Niagara Region.

Welland, Pelham, Port Colborne and Wainfleet taxpayers are already financing operation of Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport.

Niagara District Airport commissioners say the time is now for their plan, and they have a business case to move the airport from general aviation to one that supports international flights.

"It does serve an important purpose, it is an asset for the region. But it could be so much more," said Mike Britton, a St. Catharines council member on the commission. "That's what we're focused on."

While the idea isn't new, Britton said the commission wants to go to the region with a unified voice to show they're ready to make the move.

Airport manager Len O'Connor said the idea of the region taking over the airport has been discussed since 1983, but it took a jump with the commission in recent years.

An airport feasibility study conducted in 2013 was expected to support expanded domestic traffic for tourism, but instead found the biggest surge could be trans-border traffic from New York, Chicago, Boston and Washington.

O'Connor said the next step was to determine how to take the airport in that direction. That requires infrastructure for security and screening for outgoing and incoming flights by the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority and Canada Border Services Agency.

O'Connor said the business case presented said the infrastructure could be provided for less than \$8 million.

"If an airport is used right, it is a huge economic impact driver," O'Connor said.

He estimates the airport currently produces \$25 million in economic impact a year. The feasibility study showed that one full flight over a six-month period would have an economic impact of \$9 million.

Niagara Falls city councillor and commission member Joyce Morocco said the airport needs to be under the umbrella of the region so everybody has the responsibility to move it forward.

"We said listen, this is a time we really have to sit down and say 'where are we going with this?' As three municipalities, we just can't do it. We need to have the region come in and take responsibility."

Morocco said growing the airport will make the entire region more viable. It won't just benefit tourism, she said, but will play a huge role for industry.

"The GO Train would be great, but the airport is a long time coming," she said. "I think we either have to step up to the plate and make it happen or say forget it."

On Monday, Britton was to ask St. Catharines city council to dissolve the existing joint municipal service board operating the airport commission and transfer operations to the region. Niagara-on-the-Lake was to discuss a similar motion that night, and Niagara Falls was to do so on Tuesday.

Regional Chair Anna Caslin said he thinks there could be a role for the region to play with the airport, but can't start any formal conversations with the governing municipalities until they're all in alignment on the issue.

"It is a major component of our regional council strategic plan on moving people and goods," Caslin said.

"We think that further integrating the Niagara District Airport may have an important role in our regional economy and would be a great benefit to Niagara."

Britton said the consultant's report said the Niagara District Airport only needs to capture 5% of flights that go into Hamilton or Buffalo to be profitable.

That's 5% of the 643,000 people who fly into Buffalo and Hamilton airports and then come into Niagara each year.

"It's a rare opportunity where we can spend less money and actually have a better service," Britton said.

But commission treasurer Terry Flynn, a Niagara-on-the-Lake councillor, said having the region take over is not just about expanding the airport. It's also about maintaining what's there.

The airport has a \$300,000 operational budget granted by the three municipalities, based on per capita. But Flynn said it needs an additional \$800,000 a year for capital improvements, like buying a new truck, and to put into reserves.

In 2011, the airport received \$11.3 million for its terminal but it never came with capital improvements. Flynn said it is currently using a 40-year-old dump truck as a snowplow and it breaks down and there's a snowstorm, the airport must close.

"Right now we're running on a very tight budget, to the point that I have to be begging and borrowing to municipalities," he said.

And with three municipalities involved, if one says no to funding, Flynn said the airport is back at zero. One level of government will mean less bureaucracy, he said. Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake have said yes to some capital money, and St. Catharines wants to vote on granting early budget approval of \$151,000 on Monday.

"We're doing our part for the taxpayers right now, but we can only Scotch tape it together for so long before we start having issues, and that's what's happening," Flynn said.

"We've been running like this since 2011 and at some point, someone has to start ponying up."

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MUSIC

Chorus Niagara seeks new voices

JOHN LAW
Postmedia Network

Chorus Niagara will welcome four new faces when it opens the 2015-16 season next fall.

In a new home. Possibly. The new singers will join via the Robert Cooper Choral Scholars, a program formed in 2013 to mark Robert Cooper's 25th anniversary as Chorus Niagara's artistic director. Successful applicants receive a \$1,000 honorarium to aid their post-secondary vocal studies, along with the chance to sing with Chorus Niagara.

Where they'll sing is still being decided. While program co-ordinator Adrian Petry says he is "hopeful" Chorus Niagara will be performing at the new FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, it hasn't been confirmed yet.

The group regularly performs at Calvary Church in St. Catharines.

Cooper says the Choral Singers are "essential" to his goal of engaging Niagara's youth through choral music.

They join two other programs aimed at young singers — the Chorus Niagara Children's Program and the Side-by-Side High

School Chorus.

"I have focused on the development of youth in opera and choral music throughout my career," Cooper says. "A wonderful dynamic synergy is achieved when talented young vocalists merge with dedicated adult amateur singers."

Cooper has watched young singers in the other programs flourish as professional soloists. "This is personally very satisfying," he says. "And organizationally very rewarding."

Adds Petry, "Robert has a special gift, extraordinary talent and a mountain of experience in developing singers of all stripes. This is an opportunity not to be missed."

Interested candidates can request an application and register for an audition by e-mailing cnadm@becon.org.

Interested singers must prepare two contrasting selections to perform — opera arias, oratorio or art song. Applicants will be tested on their sight-reading skills, technical ability and musical awareness.

john.law@sumedia.ca

PLANNER (TEMPORARY 1 YEAR CONTRACT)

The Corporation of the City of Port Colborne is currently accepting applications for a temporary full time contract Planner position.

Reporting to the Director of Planning and Development, the Planner is responsible for the review and processing of Planning Act applications including notices, circulations, reporting writing and follow up in accordance with the established municipal procedures and relevant provincial legislation. The Planner also provides support to the Heritage Port Colborne Committee and responds to general planning inquiries from other municipal departments, outside agencies and the public.

The ideal candidate will have a University Degree or equivalent education specializing in Urban Planning in addition to two (2) years' experience in Municipal Planning.

The successful candidate will have superior customer service and presentation skills with a strong work ethic. Effective report writing, presentation, communication and organizational skills are required. This position also requires an individual that thrives in a team environment, with the ability to work autonomously to achieve multiple corporate objective deadlines simultaneously. Proficiency with Microsoft applications are required. Must have a current Class G driver's license in good standing and available to work various shifts and over time, when required.

For full details, please see the job description available at: www.portcolborne.ca.

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Application deadline: July 9, 2015 before 12:00 p.m.

Personal information is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act and will be used to determine suitability. We thank all applicants and advise that only those selected for an interview will be contacted. The City of Port Colborne is an equal opportunity employer. Accommodation is available upon request.

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■ **TRAFFIC SAFETY:** Niagara detachment's record recognized with Ontario award

OPP initiative curbing accidents

ALISON LANGLEY
Postmedia Network

Focusing attention on areas plagued by collisions

has proven successful for Jan Idzenga.

Concerned by the number of crashes on Niagara high-

ways, the staff-sergeant at the Niagara detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police pored over reports and statis-

tics and discovered consistent, repetitive patterns in collisions.

"I did a traffic analysis of all the collisions in our area dating back to 2007 and found that the crashes were happening in the same place. It was becoming repetitive, and we had to find a way to change that pattern."

To address the issue, he developed a traffic strategy with three main components: hot spot analysis and directed patrol, community policing, and collision prevention through environmental design.

The main hot spot, Idzenga said, was the stretch of the QEW between Mountain Rd. and the west end of the Garden City Skyway.

"We started dedicated patrols. There was always a car in that area," he said.

Idzenga's research also indicated a large number of collisions occurred on highway ramps.

"A lot of people would enter those ramps way too fast," he said.

The OPP worked with the Ministry of Transportation to address some pavement issues and to add signs and road markings to warn motorists.

"The crashes were reduced astronomically," Idzenga said.

He also reached out to the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission and the Peace Bridge Authority to address the issue of dangerous bottlenecks at the border.

"When the bridge traffic backs up onto the QEW, we can get lines for miles at the border," he said.

Several fatal accidents occurred in

the mid-2000s when vehicles travelling the highway collided with stopped or slow-moving trucks near the rear of the line.

To ease U.S.-bound truck traffic, the Peace Bridge now opens a staging yard where transport trucks can park until the delay is cleared.

The OPP's traffic strategy resulted in substantial collision reductions and, most notably, an 80% reduction in fatalities.

"We went from having an average of 10 fatalities a year down to two," Idzenga said.

The successful campaign caught the attention of the law enforcement community.

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) recently awarded the Niagara detachment with the 2015 traffic safety award of excellence.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Transportation, the award is presented to the police organization creating, developing, and implementing Ontario's most successful traffic safety program during the past year.

"Careful planning and execution of road safety strategies is critically important in promoting safe roads across Ontario," said Supt. Gord Jones, co-chairman of the OACP Traffic Committee.

"We congratulate the OPP Niagara Detachment for its dedicated efforts in reducing the traffic-related collisions."

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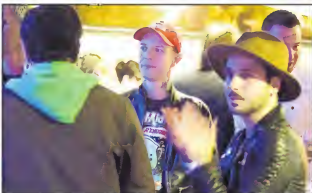
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THEATRE



BOB FINE/CYCLOP/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Niagara Falls native Joel Zimmerman – re: Deadmau5 – threatened legal action against a Toronto musical bearing the name Deadmouse, but relented when producers clarified the show was a parody. It runs during the Toronto Fringe Festival starting July 3.

Deadmau5 vs. 'Deadmouse' musical

JOHN LAW
Postmedia Network

A Toronto musical about a DJ called 'Deadmouse' earned the wrath of the real-life Deadmau5 last Wednesday night.

Niagara Falls-born Joel Zimmerman had his lawyer Dina LaPolt send the owners of the AI Green Theatre a cease-and-desist order, claiming trademark infringement over its upcoming production of *Deadmouse: The Musical*.

"How not to be creative," Zimmerman threatened, followed by "and that's why it's always best to approach people beforehand."

Zimmerman later retracted the cease-and-desist order when the show's website stressed it was a "parody," and was "not written by Deadmau5 or endorsed by Deadmau5."

"There, the dead mouse musical debacle is over," Zimmerman then tweeted. "They have just put up a disclaimer and called it a parody. Moving along now."

Producers said the show is about "a mouse who wants to be a house DJ, but is discriminated against for being a mouse." It's populated with other characters based on real people, including David Gouda (David Guetta) and Avicciene (Avicii). A character named Cat alludes to Zimmerman's former girlfriend, Kat Van D.

Actor/director Chris Baker stars as Joel Zimmerman, who faces "tough decisions about how far he will go to become the No. 1 house music DJ, and on the way learns some valuable lessons about friendship, love, loyalty and the importance of remaining true to one's heart, no matter how small it may be."

The 60-minute show is part of Toronto's annual Fringe Festival, and runs at the 120-seat AI Green Theatre (750 Spadina Ave.) July 3 to 11.

It's co-written by Toronto's Rafe Malach, who brought the well-received *First World War musical A Simple Twist of Fate* to last year's Fringe Festival.

Malach declined to comment on the *Deadmouse: The Musical* controversy when contacted last Thursday.

"We're waiting until everything dies

down before talking about anything," he said.

Zimmerman was unavailable for comment.

Before the cease-and-desist was retracted, Zimmerman had some choice words for the show on Twitter.

"Where do I send the bill for all this f---ing promo?" he asked.

Veteran Fringe Festival writer Steve Fisher of website Torontoist also waded into the fray, criticizing Zimmerman for attempting to close the show and comparing him to Disney, which is attempting to block Zimmerman from trademarking his familiar mousehead logo on the grounds it's too similar to Mickey Mouse.

"They're emerging artists, Joel," Fisher wrote. "You're Disney in this new (cease-and-desist) scenario, only more litigious."

When Zimmerman then commented: "Drama, it's what's for breakfast," Fisher lashed back "That your appetite for it leads to a courtroom. Instead of seeing how it plays out on a Toronto Fringe stage is said."

When contacted Thursday, Fisher said he was "initially surprised" by Zimmerman's reaction, "but I very quickly realized why he did what he did. He had people tweeting at him 'Fantast! There's a mouse about your life!'"

"I think it was very clear from the Fringe listing that it's not a biography or an authorized story of him. He was not an actual singing mouse in his own career."

The resulting backlash has people talking about the show, he said, and it'll likely sell out all seven scheduled performances.

"Their publicity budget will be the cast members handing out fliers on the street," says Fisher. "So for them, aside from the brief fear yesterday they would have to be cancelled, this is all turning out to be gold for them."

And might Zimmerman be in attendance?

"I'd just left to go to Europe, so it's not likely he's going to catch the run. It's a shame because I'm sure they'll have comps for him for any show he wanted to see."

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■ **MUSIC:** 'I'd love to turn this area into a Disneyland for arts'

Jazz fest goes through growth spurt

JOHN LAW
Postmedia Network

They're already Niagara's jazz power couple. So when it came time to kick start a regional jazz fest, Juliet Dunn and Peter Shea were thinking long term.

Not just a festival, but a legacy.

"Our vision is, I'd love to turn this area into a Disneyland for arts," says Shea. "I'd like art and culture to be synonymous with this region, like it is in New Orleans."

"I think the framework's here," adds his wife Dunn. "We need to convince some people still that it's possible. Sometimes, around here, we don't realize how great it is what we have. When I drive around I take a lot of the back roads, and I have to pinch myself. 'There's vineyards!' It's like living in France."

Last year's inaugural TD Niagara Jazz Festival attracted about 3,000 people for 20 artists in a handful of venues.

WHAT: TD Niagara Jazz Festival

WHERE: Various locations

WHEN: July 23 to 26

TICKETS: www.niagarajazzfestival.com or 1-844-548-5299

This year it will more than double in size, offering 35 bands, 200 artists and more than 20 venues throughout the region. It also goes from three to four days, running July 23 to 26.

Details were announced during a launch party at Two Sisters Vineyard in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The flagship event will be July 24 at Jackson-Triggs Winery, with headliner Michael Kuehhammer.

Other acts throughout the festival include Robi Botos, Barbra Lica, Heilig Manoeuvre and Big Rude Jake. Local artists include Khea Zimmerman, the Niagara String Band, Vox Violins, Sarah Jerrom Trio



MIKE DINATISTA/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Juliet Dunn and Peter Shea, organizers of the TD Niagara Jazz Festival, are pictured at the launch party at Two Sisters Vineyard in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

and John Sherwood Swingin' Quintet.

Shows will take place in wineries, restaurants, parks and cafes. Dunn says week-end packages will enable festival-goers to stay and have a "unique Niagara experience" over four days.

"Niagara is worthy," says Dunn, who started her career as a singer/actress in France. "So many times, people say to me, 'You lived in Paris, France for 13 years — what are you doing in St. Catharines?' And it really irks me. I'm always defending it, going, 'No, it's

really great."

"The potential is bubbling," adds Shea. "There's so much here. I think it's serendipitous (Juliet and I) are back in the region. I was born and raised here."

"We want to pass on this legacy. What I was given

when I came up, I want to give more. That's why we're trying to keep arts and music and culture alive, because society needs it. I don't think they're aware how desperate they need it."

Shea, the festival's artistic director, is aiming for 10,000 people for the second year, despite a recent Nielsen music report which shows jazz's popularity among music buyers at an all-time low.

Whatever its sales figures, Shea says jazz is still a popular genre for festivals.

"It's the sense of community," he says. "I've seen young people go (out) and not even have a conversation ... they sit across from each other at a cafe and text each other."

"People are disconnecting from one another and this is one of the reasons festivals are making a comeback."

"Jazz might not be as popular, but the festivals are," adds Dunn. "People need human contact."

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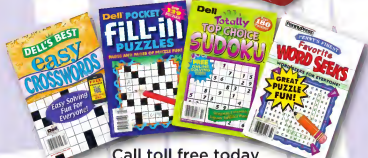
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